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DIALOGUE

BETWIXT

Jack and Aill,

Concerning the

Lord Mayor's

Going to Meeting-Houses

WITH THE

S W O R D

Carried before Him, &c.

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BETWIXT

**Jack** and **Will.**

Concerning

The Lord Mayor's going to Meeting-houses with the Sword before him, &c.

*Jack.* **H**OW d' ye Friend *Will?* have you heard the News?

*Will.* What News d' ye mean  
*Jack?* We have little cause to fear ill News, now we have Peace.

*Jack.* No? I'm sure I have a piece of ill News to tell you. Did not you hear that my Lord Mayor went to *Salter's-Hall* on Sunday last, with the Sword carried before him?

*Will.* To *Salter's-Hall*, what to do? to a Play, or a Ball there?

*Jack.* Pox on ye for a nump-skull'd Fellow, to a Play or a Ball on Sundays!

*Will.* Why all this Fury, *Jack*? I'm sure I have read a Play that was acted at *Whitehall* on a Sunday in the Blessed Martyr's time, present King, Queen, Prince, and God knows how many Stars and Garters: but indeed I don't know whether the Sword was carried thither in State or no.

*Jack.* Come, come, *Will*; you love to play the Rogue; you know the Lord Mayor went thither on no such Account.

*Will.* Why so? how sho'd I know? d'ye think I am a Conjuror? What did he go thither for then? was it to hear Archbishop *Land's* Book of Sports? I hear my Lord Mayor is a brisk Man, perhaps he loves Sport and Pastime, and is a good Gamester; for you know we use to say of such, that they play a Sunday.

*Jack.* Plague on ye, leave off your Banter, I tell you he went thither to a Conventicle.

*Will.* Pish, what is that your ill News? I was afraid you'd have told me that he had gone to treat the Pope's Nuncio at Dinner at Guildhall; or that you had had some such frightful Story to tell me, as that the Town was on fire again, and we should have been forc'd to be at the Expence of a new Monument, which would have ruin'd the Orphans to all Intents and Purposes.

*Jack.* Well well, Friend *Will*, tho' the Town be not a fire, I am sure the Church is.

*Will.*

*Will.* Nay then Friend *Jack*, my Lord Mayor did very well to carry the *wooden Sword* away from it, for that would have added Fewel to the Flames.

*Jack.* Prethee leave off thy fooling, and let's discourse the Point in good earnest; thou always pretendedst to be a true Church-of-*England*-man, and don't ye think that the Lord Mayor's going to a Conventicle with the Sword is an Injury to the Church of *England*?

*Will.* Why truly *Jack*, whether thou believest it or not, I am as much for the Church of *England* as any Man alive, and for my part I think that my Lord Mayor's going to Meetings with the Sword is a very *noble Act*: for it seems to me, that by carrying the Sword thither, he designs to make a Conquest of 'em for the Church of *England*.

*Jack.* Well, I see you love to banter: but you know that by going thither with the Sword, he makes a Surrender of the Church of *England's* Authority to a pitiful little Conventicle.

*Will.* Why prethee Man, if the Sword be all, no matter if it had been burnt a dozen Years ago: Thou knowest very well, that in the late Blessed Reigns it was the peculiar Doctrine of the Pulpits, that the Church had no other Weapons but Prayers and Tears; and why dost make all this pother about a wooden Sword? Sure thou art not afraid it will produce as strange Effects as the old rusty Sword in *Westminster Abbey*, with which they say the Norman Duke conquer'd *England*.

*Jack.* Thou talkest like a mad Man; it's not the very individual Sword that I mean, but it's the Badg; and Ensign of Authority that is carried away from the

the Church to a nasty lowzy Conventicle : a Pox on 'em, damn 'em, I hope to see 'em fast in the *Pinsfold* yet once more before I die ; and then we'll make 'em pay for their Insolence, and Contempt of the Church.

*Will.* Prethee don't rage so : thou hast been so out of Humour ever since *Lewis XIV* was necessitated to resign his new Conquests, and abjure King *James*, that thou art fitter for *Bedlam* than any Place else. Come, I tell thee, that my Lord Mayor's carrying the Sword thither, neither adds to the Authority of the Meetings, nor derogates from the Authority of the Church of *England*, but rather enlarges her Pale. But after all the doe and stir you make about the Church, I believe I may say to you as the little Boy said to his Mother, *Mother, what need you talk so much of the Church ? you don't go so often to it.*

*Jack.* That's nothing to you *Will* : do you make out your Assertion, and then I'll say something to thee.

*Will.* Have but Patience, and I will. Thou knowest that the Dissenters are allowed their Meetings by Act of Parliament, which I hope is another kind of Authority than my Lord Mayor's Sword ; and most honest Men think it but reasonable they should have that Liberty, notwithstanding the threatening Words of the D—n of C. *that if King William did not take away the damn'd Act of Toleration, they'd send him back again to the Bogs of Holland.*

*Jack.* Prethee let your Stories alone, and come to the matter. I own that an Act of Parliament is a better Authority than my Lord Mayor's Sword.

*Will.*

*Will.* Thou knowest also that that Liberty is allow'd them on condition that they subscribe to the Doctrine of the Church of England.

*Jack.* I do.

*Will.* Why then it's certain that my Lord Mayor could not go thither with nor without his Sword, if the Dissenters did not qualify themselves according to the Terms of the Act.

*Jack.* No, he could not.

*Will.* Is it not plain then, that if my Lord Mayor's Sword signify any thing, it comes to defend the Doctrine of the Church of *England* at the Meeting as well as in the Church? And is not his Presence there with the Ensigns of Authority an Evidence that the Doctrine of our Church is preach'd there? whereas in former times the Meetings were look'd upon to be quite another thing than the Church of *England*. So that I think it is plain to any Man's Understanding, that his being there is only a Declaration that the Pale of the Church is enlarg'd, and that we now own them for Brethren, that by the heat of some ill Men were formerly accounted our Enemies!

*Jack.* Nay but you mistake the Matter. The Meetings have only a Liberty, but ours is the Church establish'd by Law; their Meetings must not be accounted the Church, because they have neither Bishops, nor Ceremonies, nor Benefices.

*Will.* Prethee *Jack* don't talk such Nonsense. The Meetings are as much establish'd by Law as the Church of *England*, if an Act of Parliament be a Law: and you know that it's only the Acts of Parliament that defend you in the practice of those things wherein you differ from them. And our wise

Law.

Law-givers finding the mischievous Consequence of having one Party of Protestants empower'd to destroy another that differed from them only in Circumstantial, as if they had been Hereticks, Schismatics, and God knows what, thought fit to take those Edg-tools out of the hands of a set of Men that know not how to use them, but to the wrong of their Neighbours, and to throw the Nation into Convulsions; and have granted Liberty to our Brethren to worship God in the very same Ordinances that we do, tho they don't observe all those Modes and Forms which by our selves are accounted indifferent.

*Jack.* How do you mean indifferent? Is it a thing indifferent to observe the Directions and Commands of the Church? that's fine Work indeed!

*Will.* By Indifferent I mean a thing that may be done or left undone, and so the Law means; otherwise it would never have left me at my liberty to go to a Meeting where there are no Ceremonies, or to a Church where there are Ceremonies.

*Jack.* I am sure the Church is Apostolical, and enjoin'd those things upon her Members on pain of Excommunication, both as to Belief and Practice, if we may believe her Canons.

*Will.* Thou art in a grand Mistake, *Jack.* I grant you there was once such a Set of Men as arrogated to themselves the Name of the Church, that did so; but you know that the greatest Divines of the Church of *England* did always account those things indifferent even in *Queen Elizabeth's* time: Read but the Lord Bishop of *Salisbury's* Letters, and you will there find plain Proofs of it, under the Hands of our greatest



greatest Bishops to the Divines in *Switzerland* : and for what hath been done since, you know that it was a Court, and a Popish Faction that enjoin'd those things on such and such Penalties, merely to widen the Differences amongst Protestants, that they might swallow up both our Religion and Liberties ; but the Church of *England* hath altered her Mind since.

*Jack*. How ! the Church of *England* alter'd her Mind ? What ? d' ye make her akin to *Mahomet* ? as if her Religion depended upon the Moon, and were as changeable as she.

*Will*. Prethee not so fast *Jack*, I know what I say ; the Church of *England* hath alter'd her Mind oftner than once ; and no Disgrace to her neither. Protestants hold no Church nor Council Infallible ; we have indeed an infallible Rule, the Scriptures, but so long as we are clogg'd with Humanity, we are either like to come short of it, or shoot beyond it ; and in both these Cases must alter our Mind, or set our selves in opposition to the Almighty.

*Jack*. This is Fanatical Cant. When did the Church of *England* alter her Mind ?

*Will*. Nay *Jack*, if you be so forgetful, I'll tell you : The Church of *England* in Queen *Elizabeth's* time prayed her to cut off *Mary* Queen of Scots, the Heir apparent, or presumptive at least, to the Crown, and a Crown'd Head too, because she was at the Head of a Popish Plot. In *Charles* the Second's time the Church of *England* damn'd all them that were but for excluding the Duke of *York* upon the like Account. In Queen *Elizabeth's* time the Church of *England* made an Act of Parliament, that the

King and Parliament might limit and alter the Succession; it is the 13<sup>th</sup> of *Eliz.* as I take it: In *Charles* the First and Second's time they accounted it damnable Doctrine to recede in the least from the Hereditary Lineal Succession. In *Charles* the First and Second's time she held it damnable not to believe the Doctrines of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance, and all her Clergy were sworn to it in her Sense: but in the end of *James* the Second's Reign, when he came to touch their own Copyhold, then the Church bellow'd so loud, that she was heard as far as the *Hague*, she put on a blue Cloak and Jack-boots, and fought against her Sovereign with Jack and Spear, and after all settled King *William*, our present glorious Monarch, on the Throne, contrary to all her former avow'd Principles. So that you must either own that the Church of *England* hath alter'd her Mind, or declare yourself a rank Jacobite, and disown any Church but their Faction: and to tell you the truth, it's that wretched Cabal that blows all these Sparks of Contention among the hot-headed Party of our Church, and I know you keep Company with them.

*Jack.* Thou hast said a great deal to convince me; but pray let me see how the Church of *England* hath alter'd her Mind as to that Point of the Dissenters.

*Will.* Why they have alter'd it in giving them their Liberty by a Law, whereas they formerly persecuted them.

*Jack.* How strangely do you talk? It was the Parliament that gave them the Liberty, and not the Church;

Church ; if she had done it, it must have been by Convocation.

*Will.* Nay *Jack*, you talk strangely, and not I. Is not all the People of *England* represented by the Parliament ?

*Jack.* Who doubts that ?

*Will.* Is not the Church then represented in Parliament ?

*Jack.* That's another thing : The Church is the Bishops and their Clergy.

*Will.* Grant it be so : The Bishops you know do actually sit in Parliament in the House of Lords ; so that you must own the Church is well enough represented there where all her Fathers meet ; and you likewise know that the Clergy as Freeholders have their Votes in chusing Members of the House of Commons, so that there the Clergy is sufficiently represented, nay better and more universally than in any Convocation. Then you know the Laity of the Church is truly represented in Parliament, whereas they have no room in the Convocation, which is only the Officers of the Church, and can no more be call'd the Church it self, than Officers without Souldiers can be call'd an Army. So that when you inveigh against the Liberty given to our Dissenting Brethren, you inveigh against the Church of *England* her self, who by her Bishops and other Representatives in Parliament have granted them that Liberty : And tho they have reserv'd the Sacramental Test as a Quit-rent, to make all those who come into any Place of Power and Trust, acknowledg their being Members of that Body of Protestants who are known by the name of the Church-

yet they have not restrain'd any of those Members from frequenting other Meetings where the Doctrine of the Church is preach'd either with or without the Ensigns and Badges of their Office. So that those Gentlemen who by their Order would go to restrain an Act of Parliament, might do well to consider how they will be able to justify themselves if the Parliament should call them in question for it ; which they are more like to do than to turn his Lordship out for acting conformably to the Law, and the Practice of other Corporations, to whom *London* ought rather to set a Pattern for asserting the Liberties of the Subject, than to follow them.

*Jack*, Nay now thou speakest big, *Will*.

*Will*. I have reason for what I say. It's the Parliament that hath settled the Limits of our Church, and given her all the Authority she has, otherwise 'tis a mere Bull to call her the Church by Law establish'd ; and that same Authority may enlarge her Bounds and Pale when they please : and therefore to be so angry at the Parliament for taking in all those that embrace the Doctrine of the Church under the Protection of the Law, tho it has not admitted 'em to partake of the Benefices, is a horrid piece of Ingratitude to that August Assembly, who have all along defended the Church of *England* in the Possession of what she enjoys, more than her Brethren the Dissenters ; and by this Liberty the Parliament have added to her Strength, by giving those a Legal Authority to defend her Doctrine without Wages, which so many of those that profess themselves to be her Sons, have either slyly undermin'd,

or

or but faintly asserted, notwithstanding their Benefices. And you know, *Jack*, that the Dissenters have been as stanch Patriots of their Country, and Defenders of our Religion and Liberties, as any Men in the Nation: and therefore it's the Interest of all Men that wish well to either of 'em, to promote a hearty Union amongst Protestants of all Denominations whatsoever. So that for my own part I can see no harm in my Lord Mayor's carrying the Sword to a Meeting as well as to a Church; it has heard Passive Obedience preach'd long enough, and it will do it no hurt to be taught the Doctrine of Self-defence in its turn: for if the latter Doctrine had not been more serviceable to us than the former, we had neither had a Protestant Church nor Meeting House to have carried the Sword to long e're this.

*Jack*. Well, but for all that you can't but say it's an ill thing to carry the Sword thither.

*Will*. Prethee in what sense is it ill? For my part I think the Sword ought to be carried thither rather than any where else; because to give the Dissenters their due, they always held that it was lawful to make use of the Sword in defence of their Religion and Liberties, as well against Tyrants at home, as from Invaders abroad: whereas many of our Churchmen would allow of no other Weapons against a Tyrant at home but Prayers and Tears: but to say the truth, and no more, that was only while the Tyrant impowered them to tyrannize over the Bodies, Consciences and Estates of their Fellow Christians and Subjects; for when he came to touch themselves, nay *but one of their Fingers*, as a famous Author has  
it,

it, they made use of Guns and Spears, instead of Prayers and Tears, against him; and *let him understand*, as the same Author says, *that they had given him only a spiritual Kingdom, and not a Kingdom of this World: for if his Kingdom had been of this World, then would his Servants have fought for him.*

*Jack.* Ay but a pox on't, tho we allow our selves to do so, yet we would not have the Dissenters use the Sword; ours is the Apostolical Church, and they are but Schismatics.

*Will.* That's easier said than proved; they hold the Doctrine of our Church, and live up to it as well, if not better than many of our selves: so that we must not call Men Schismatics for differing from us in those things which we our selves account Indifferent. And as for the Sword, tho some Gentlemen have thought fit to endeavour the preventing its being carried to Meetings by an Order, I cannot think that the Act of Parliament did ever intend to make better Provision for our Swords than for our Souls, or for the Ensigns of Magistracy than for Magistrates themselves. If our Legislators had thought the going to Meetings would be either hurtful to the Bodies, Estates, Liberties, or Consciences of English Men, they would never have allow'd them at all; and if they had thought that the Nation would be any ways endangered by Magistrates going to Meetings, they would have made an Exception against it. So that for any Party of Men to take upon them to bind up any Person, especially a Magistrate of so great Power and Trust as the Lord Mayor of *London*, where the Law has left him at liberty, seems to me to be a manifest Incroachment upon

on the Legislative Power : and I wish with all my Heart there may not be more of Envy and particular Pique, (in such especially that are angry to see the Lord Mayor have more Courage than some of his Predecessors) than of Zeal for the Church of *England*, at the bottom of this Opposition : for my own part I know not why those Dissenters who have so cordially contributed to deliver us from Tyranny and Popery, should be suffered still to languish and groan under the Yoke of an Ecclesiastical Tyranny themselves, and be deprived of the Liberties and Privileges that other English Protestants enjoy. So farewell *Jack* till next Meeting.

*Jack*, I have not had such a rude Mercurial this good while ; I'll go to *Sam's*, and get a Glass of Cordial Water, and then to the Commons, and recruit my self over a Bottle, and muster up more Forces against next Meeting. Farewel.

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*F I N I S.*